OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting held on Thursday, 17th September, 2026 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr Halleh Koohestani (Chair)
Cllr Kevin Betsworth (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Steve Harden (Vice-Chair)

Cllr A. Adeola
Cllr Uttar Gurung
Cllr G.B Lyon
Cllr Sally McGuinness
Cllr Bill O'Donovan
Cllr Nicky Slater

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr Mike Roberts and Cllr Becky Williams.

Cllr Lisa Greenway attended the meeting as a Standing Deputy.

11. **APPOINTMENTS 2026-27**

The Committee **NOTED** changes to the Membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, for the remainder of the 2026/27 Municipal Year, as set out below:

- Cllr Becky Williams to be appointed to the Committee in place of Cllr Sarah Spall

- Cllr Sarah Spall to be appointed as Standing Deputy for the Committee in place of the Labour vacancy

12. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meetings held on 13th July, 2026 were agreed as a correct record.

13. **POLICING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY**

The Committee welcomed Chief Inspector Alex Reading, Hampshire Police and the Council's Community Safety Manager, David Lipscombe who were in attendance to report on current priorities, performance information and key achievements over the previous twelve months, within the policing and community safety sector. Also in attendance was the Portfolio Holder for Pride in Place and Neighbourhood Services, Cllr Christine Guinness.

The Committee were advised that Hampshire Police had continued to strengthen local policing arrangements through increased officer numbers, with additional officers being transferred into neighbourhood policing teams as they gained experience. Members noted that neighbourhood policing remained focused on anti-social behaviour, drug-related harm, anti-social driving, hate crime, community cohesion and youth-related disorder. Particular attention had been given to anti-social behaviour in Aldershot town centre, youth disorder linked to football activities and anti-social behaviour at Farnborough Skate Park. Members were informed that partnership working was continuing with local schools, community organisations, parents and Aldershot Football Club to address the behaviour of a small number of young people involved in incidents.

During discussion, Members explored opportunities to provide early intervention and support for young people. The Committee heard that organisations such as Yellow Brick Road and social prescribing schemes were being utilised to help divert young people away from criminal activity and provide mentoring and support. Members welcomed the preventative approach and discussed the importance of positive role models and community-based interventions.

The Committee discussed anti-social behaviour and drug-related activity within residential neighbourhoods and public spaces. Members raised questions regarding reports of drug-related activity in local communities and sought reassurance that sufficient resources were available to address emerging issues. In response, it was explained that enforcement activity was intelligence-led and that police resources were directed towards those individuals and networks assessed as presenting the greatest risk.

Members discussed local policing priorities and the mechanisms through which residents could influence those priorities. It was explained that priorities were informed through reported incidents, intelligence, community engagement, surveys and partnership information. Members expressed a desire for greater opportunities for Councillors to feed local concerns directly into policing discussions and highlighted the importance of ensuring that issues not routinely reported through traditional channels were still identified and addressed.

The Committee considered speeding concerns raised frequently by residents across the Borough. Members discussed the use of Speed Indicator Devices, Speedwatch initiatives and police enforcement activity and questioned whether additional deployment of speed monitoring equipment could assist in addressing residents' concerns. The Committee were advised that speeding remained a common issue raised through community engagement and that both educational and enforcement approaches were used to address the problem. Members noted that Speedwatch schemes relied on volunteers and that police officers were also able to undertake targeted speed enforcement activity where concerns had been identified.

The Committee reviewed crime statistics covering the previous twelve months. Members noted an overall reduction in recorded crime compared with the previous year and were advised that crime trends continued to be monitored closely to identify emerging hotspots and patterns. Members requested that consideration be given to

providing longer-term trend data in future presentations to assist with scrutiny and comparison of performance over time.

The Committee discussed hate crime and community cohesion. Members noted that race-related hate crime remained the most frequently reported category and sought reassurance regarding arrangements for monitoring community tensions and responding to reports of hate crime. Particular discussion took place in relation to incidents affecting the Nepalese community and the work being undertaken to encourage reporting and engagement with the police. Members also raised questions regarding faith-related incidents and broader national trends. The Committee were advised that community impact assessments were undertaken, where appropriate, and that partnership arrangements existed to monitor tensions and coordinate responses where concerns arose.

Members considered the use of stop and search powers and discussed public confidence in the fair and proportionate use of those powers. The Committee were advised that stop and search activity was subject to extensive scrutiny and review, including oversight by independent groups and body worn video monitoring. Members acknowledged the importance of proportionality whilst recognising stop and search as a valuable policing tool in tackling crime and reducing risk within communities. Discussion also took place regarding the safeguards surrounding more intrusive search powers and the arrangements in place to ensure appropriate oversight and accountability.

The Committee discussed communication between Hampshire Police, Councillors and residents, particularly following significant incidents. Members expressed a desire for improved communication arrangements to assist Councillors in providing reassurance to residents when major incidents occurred in their wards. It was acknowledged that operational and legal constraints sometimes limited the information that could be shared but Members emphasised the importance of timely communication wherever possible. Members also suggested that stronger links between local Councillors and neighbourhood policing teams would be beneficial.

The Committee welcomed David Lipscombe, Community Safety Manager, who was in attendance to provide an update on the work of the Community Safety Team. Mr Lipscombe outlined the Team's responsibilities under the Crime and Disorder Act, which included responding to crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour (ASB), coordinating multi-agency casework, managing the Council's CCTV service and supporting safeguarding arrangements across the Council. He explained that the Team continued to utilise a range of early intervention measures, including warning letters, home visits, education and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts, alongside formal enforcement tools where required.

The Committee was informed of the diverse responsibilities carried out by the Community Safety Team. These included acting as the Council's safeguarding lead, participation in the Hampshire PREVENT Partnership and Channel Panel, involvement in the Serious Violence Duty through partnership arrangements across Hampshire, and coordination of domestic abuse work, including the North-East Hampshire Domestic Abuse Forum and Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews. Members were advised that 94 safeguarding referrals had been completed during

2026 to date and that referrals for Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews were increasing, placing additional pressure on local authority resources.

Members were informed of the volume of work undertaken by the Team during the year. The Team had triaged approximately 900 police reports, responded to 323 direct enquiries, coordinated multi-agency referrals and managed a significant number of CCTV incidents. The CCTV service had recorded 2,319 incidents, resulting in 78 arrests. Members noted that demand on the service continued to increase, with direct enquiries having doubled compared with the same period in the previous year.

The Committee received details of a number of projects and initiatives delivered during the year. These included the Think Safe project for Year 6 pupils, which had engaged 932 pupils from 15 schools, the replacement of CCTV cameras in Aldershot Multi-Storey Car Park, the completion of additional CCTV coverage in Farnborough town centre and successful funding bids for mobile CCTV equipment. Members also noted the continued use of the DISC retailer system, detached youth outreach sessions, community safety awareness campaigns and educational work relating to cycling, e-scooters and anti-social behaviour.

The Committee considered a number of case studies which demonstrated the complexity of the Team's work. These included the management of a long-running neighbour dispute, intervention work with young people involved in fire-setting incidents and partnership work with schools, Hampshire Police, and Network Rail, to address reports of young people accessing railway infrastructure. Members recognised the value of early intervention and detached youth outreach work in preventing escalation and reducing risk. Members welcomed the success of the outreach programme and recognised the benefits it had delivered in engaging with young people, preventing escalation of issues and supporting community safety objectives. The Committee noted that current grant funding was due to expire at the end of September 2026 and supported continued efforts to identify future funding opportunities.

During discussion, Members sought clarification regarding Anti-Social Behaviour Case Reviews. It was explained that the reviews provided an independent assessment where residents believed reports of anti-social behaviour had not been appropriately addressed and enabled partner agencies to identify any further actions that could be taken. Members were encouraged to contact the Community Safety Team where such concerns were raised by residents.

Members discussed current staffing arrangements and sought clarification about recruitment challenges and vacancy levels.

Members also expressed concern that the reduction in the deployment of Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) could impact efforts to tackle speeding, particularly given the level of concern raised by residents. It was agreed that further information on SID deployment arrangements would be shared with Members. A question was also raised regarding why a previous bid for CCTV in Fernhill had not progressed. In response, it was explained that the Council had instead pursued a borough-wide mobile CCTV approach, funded through the Anti-Social Behaviour Fund, to allow

cameras to be deployed flexibly to hotspot locations. An initial camera had been purchased and was due to be trialled, with the potential for further cameras to be acquired if successful.

Members raised concerns regarding graffiti, particularly where tagging contributed to perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour. It was acknowledged graffiti could impact on residents' feelings of safety and advised that offensive graffiti was removed as a priority, whilst options to address wider tagging issues would continue to be explored. Discussion also took place regarding properties with large numbers of vehicles causing concerns for neighbouring residents, and officers agreed to review a specific case raised during the meeting.

The Committee noted the Community Safety Survey results, which had showed an improvement in residents' feelings of safety compared with previous years. Members were advised that survey findings were shared with partners and informed local priorities. The Committee also discussed the use of Artificial Intelligence in analysing community safety data and were advised that the Council was continuing to explore appropriate uses of AI. Hampshire Police were already using AI in limited and carefully controlled circumstances to assist with the analysis of large datasets.

Members welcomed the positive work being undertaken by the Community Safety Team and recognised the breadth of responsibilities managed by the service. The Committee noted the increasing demand arising from community safety, mental health and social care related issues, youth anti-social behaviour and Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews and acknowledged the Team's ongoing efforts to respond effectively to these challenges. Members thanked David Lipscombe and his team for their continued work in supporting community safety across Rushmoor.

The Chair thanked Chief Inspector Alex Reading, David Lipscombe and Councillor Guinness for their presentation and contributions to the meeting.

ACTION:

What	**By Whom**	**When**
Provide crime statistics for West Farnborough/West Heath.	Chief Inspector Alex Reading - Hampshire Police	ASAP
Share contact details for local policing teams and local officers with Members.	Chief Inspector Alex Reading - Hampshire Police	ASAP
Review the anti-social behaviour case raised by Cllr Adeola and liaise with the relevant housing association.	David Lipscombe – Community Safety Manager	November 2026
Circulate the forthcoming Community Safety Strategic Assessment to Members.	David Lipscombe – Community Safety Manager	December 2026
Officers to provide Members with further information regarding SID provision, deployment arrangements and	James Knight – Service Manager – Place Protection	December 2026

any changes to the current programme.		
Provide information on the Council's use of Artificial Intelligence in relation to community safety data and analysis.	David Lipscombe – Community Safety Manager	December 2026

14. **WORK PLAN**

The Committee noted the current Work Plan.

Members were advised of the special meeting scheduled for 21 September 2026 to undertake pre-decision scrutiny of the SERCO Contract Extension and noted the forthcoming items on Skills, Economy and Regeneration and the Young People Plan. Members were invited to submit suggestions for future scrutiny topics for consideration by the Agenda Preparation Group. During discussion, it was suggested that a future item should consider care plan processes and partnership working with Hampshire County Council.

ACTION:

What	By Whom	When
The Agenda Preparation Group to consider adding the following agenda item to a future meeting – 'HCC to review their processes to ensure faster receipt of Care Plans for Housing cases'.	Agenda Preparation Group	28 September 2026 Meeting

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.

CLLR HALLEH KOOHESTANI (CHAIR)
